



**Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
Highways and Transit Subcommittee
Prepared Testimony For David Kelly
Executive Director, Partnership for Advancing Road Safety
June 30, 2010**

Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is David Kelly and I am the Executive Director of the Partnership for Advancing Road Safety (PARS). PARS represents communities, safety organizations and law enforcement agencies that use automated road safety systems to calm traffic and make their communities safer. PARS is committed to working with municipalities, government officials, public and private organizations, and concerned citizens to develop and share best practices in traffic safety and raise awareness of the important role technology plays in enforcing the traffic laws set by the community. PARS is funded by the automated enforcement industry.

Photo Enforcement Saves Lives

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has determined that red light running is the number one cause for urban accidents. They have also determined that red light cameras can reduce red light running by about 40%. In 2008, 762 people were killed and an estimated 137,000 were injured in crashes that involved red light running. About half of the deaths in red light running crashes are pedestrians and occupants in other vehicles who are hit by the red light runners.

Safety cameras work, and we have the research to back it up. A recent study in Texas showed a 43% decrease in right angle crashes and a 30% decrease in all crashes after cameras were installed.

Anecdotally, many localities are also reporting safety benefits of these intersection safety systems. Police in Aurora, IL recently reported that in the six months since red-light cameras were installed at three of the city's busiest intersections, traffic crashes drop in those intersections dropped by 43 percent. In the Pensacola, FL, area, there has been a 20 percent reduction in the number of accidents on busy U.S. 98 since the cameras were installed five years ago. In New Orleans, cameras led to an 85 percent reduction in violations. In Iowa, cameras led to a 90 and 40 percent reduction in intersection crashes respectively in Council Bluffs and Davenport.

The IIHS has also studied the effectiveness of speed safety systems. These studies show that these systems can substantially reduce speeding on a wide range of roadway types. Institute studies in Maryland, Arizona and the District of Columbia found that the proportion of drivers exceeding speed limits by more than 10 mph declined by 70, 95, and 82 percent respectively.

Photo Enforcement is Constitutional

Several cases throughout the country have gone to court and been appealed, including many favorable decisions in various US Circuit Courts across the country. Most of these cases are dismissed at the summary judgment level and the programs are consistently held constitutionally valid. Not once, when faced with the constitutionality of cameras, has photo enforcement been found unconstitutional.

Once a system is up and running, violations captured are sent to the local police or enforcement entity for their review. If the local enforcement entity approves the violation, and only then, a citation is mailed to the registered owner of the offending vehicle. In most cases, the citation will include a photograph of the vehicle and the license plate. In a few cases, a picture of the driver is also included. At that point, the violator may go online to view a video of their violation and the still pictures.

Photo enforcement is unique in that the same evidence is available to the police, the prosecutor, the judge, and the violator. In addition, it is an overwhelming amount of evidence, which greatly helps determine guilt or innocence. Regardless of the amount of evidence, violators are given the same due process as one captured by a police officer should they decide to contest their ticket in a court of law.

While there are those that debate the merits of this technology, we should all agree that it is not okay to speed, run red lights, drive while distracted or impaired, or in any other way endanger the lives of others on our roads and highways. We will partner with anyone committed to sending this clear and consistent message to the driving public to improve public safety including crash victims, local law enforcement agencies, elected officials, public and private organizations.

Photo enforcement saves lives. We have seen it in cities, towns and states across the country. Independent, third party organizations have confirmed it. I appreciate your time and interest in this life saving technology and welcome any questions.

###